



Department of Public Safety

October 12, 2017

Senate Transportation Committee
Chair: Senator Tom Casperson

Subject: SB No. 543 Testimonial For Chief Ed Switalski

Fire Chief Ed Switalski was a colleague and my friend. Ed was a man with a very contagious personality. He naturally drew people to him through his enthusiasm, passion and willingness to help. In the years that I worked with Ed in the fire service, I never heard him tell anyone no when they were asking for assistance. Whether it was serving on a committee, helping to organize an event, or to conduct research on a piece of firefighting equipment or tactical strategy, Ed always engaged himself. Chief Switalski was a natural leader, who people enjoyed being around, known for his quick wit, great sense of humor and his humbleness. He was a lifelong teacher who was always eager to share his vast knowledge and experiences. Chief Switalski was also a very safety oriented person. He would strive to provide the best equipment, training

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and procedures for the men and women who worked for him so that everyone went home at the end of the incident.

Unfortunately, this was not the case for himself on that terrible night while responding to a motor vehicle accident on I-94. Chief Switalski paid the ultimate sacrifice doing what he loved to do, help people. I would urge you to designate the portion of I-94 that Comstock Charter Township provides emergency services to in the memory of Fire Chief Ed Switalski. My hope is that it would continue to serve as a constant reminder to all travelers on I-94 who see the signs, to slow down and move over when they encounter emergency personnel working on the highway.

Sincerely,

John Podgorski, EFO/CFO
Senior Deputy Fire Chief-Operations
Portage Fire Division

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